(vi) The Government has decided to provide Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) to Turbo-prop aircraft at international prices and to treat the ATF provided to Turbo-prop aircraft as a "declared good" under the Central Sales Tax Act, 1956 which would cap the sales tax at 4%.

(vii) Government has also decided to exempt all currently operated routes in the North-East from Inland Air Travel Tax (IATT).

(viii) The recommendations contained in the Task Force report with regard to development of airport infrastructure and airlinks to the region are at various stages of implementation.

GDP Growth rate in 1999—2000

†*430. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the annual growth rate of gross domestic product is estimated to be less than the target fixed on account of decline in annual growth rate of agricultural production during the financial year 1999-2000;

(b) if not, what is Government's reaction in this regard; and

(c) what are the annual growth rates estimated in agriculture, industry and service sectors during the above year and how these rates compare to those in the last year?

- THE FINANCE MINISTER (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) to (c) Growth in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated at 5.9 per cent during 1999-2000 as against the target growth rate of 6.5 per cent per annum envisaged for the Ninth Plan (1997—2002). Growth in GDP originating in agriculture sector during 1999-2000 is estimated at 0.8 per cent against 7.2 per cent in 1998-99. The various policy initiatives undertaken over the last few years are expected to put India on a sustained, equitable and job creating growth path of 7 to 8 per cent per year within a decade. The annual overall and sectoral real GDP growth rates at factor cost at 1993-94 prices are as follows:—

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Growth over previous year in per cent

	Sectors	1998-99(Q)	1999-2000(A)
I.	Agriculture	7.2	0.8
II.	Industry	4.0	6.9
III.	Services	8.3	8.2
IV.	Total GDP	6.8	5.9

NOTE: Q: Quick estimates; A: Advance estimates I. includes agriculture, forestry and fishing. II. includes mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply and construction. III. includes trade, hotels, transport and communications, financial services, real estate and business services, community, social and personal services.

Vacancies of judges in Patna High Court

*431. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that quite a large number of vacancies in Patna High Court have hampered the administration of Justice in Bihar;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) by when the vacancies of judges in Patna High Court are likely to be filled-up for speedier justice to the people of Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF LAW JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) The number of vacancies in the Patna High Court, as on 18th April, 2000, was 9.

The filling up of vacancies in the High Courts is a consultative process among the Constitutional authorities. While every efforts is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies do keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges. It is not possible to indicate the exact time by which the vacant posts are likely to be filled up.